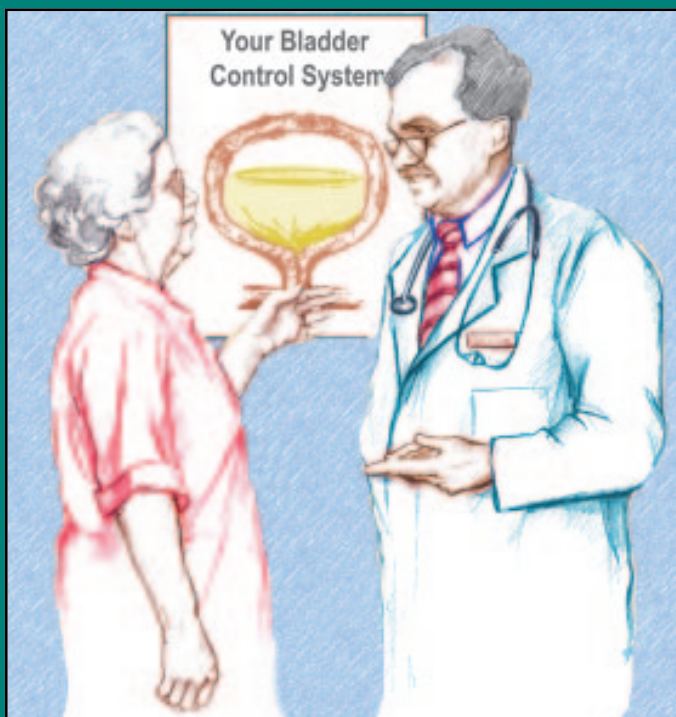


# Talking to Your Health Care Team About Bladder Control



B L A D D E R

*Let's talk about bladder control for women.  
There's treatment that works.*

C O N T R O L

*Let's Talk about Bladder Control for Women* is a public health awareness campaign conducted by the National Kidney and Urologic Diseases Information Clearinghouse (NKUDIC), an information dissemination service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), National Institutes of Health.

1-800-891-5388

# Why is it so hard to talk about bladder control?

You may feel embarrassed to talk about such a personal thing. Or, like many women, you may feel ashamed about loss of bladder control.

But, when you learn it's a medical problem, you know it's not your fault. Millions of other women have the same problem.

Your health care team can help you. Nearly everyone with a bladder control problem can be helped.

You need to ask the doctor questions. And the doctor needs to ask you questions. By talking, you will learn

- why you have a bladder control problem
- which treatment is right for you.

# How can you tell your doctor about a bladder control problem?

Even if you feel shy, it is up to you to take the first step. Some doctors do not treat bladder control problems, so they don't ask about it. Others might expect you to bring up the subject.

Because bladder control problems are common, your doctor has probably heard many stories like yours. If your doctor does not treat bladder problems, ask for help finding someone who *can* help you.

The good news is that most women with bladder control problems can get better, with the help of their health care team.



Your doctor needs to know what medicines you take.

# What questions should you ask?

These questions can help your health care team find the cause of your bladder control problem.

- Could my usual food or drinks cause bladder problems?
- Could my medicines (prescription or over-the-counter drugs) cause bladder problems?
- Could other medical conditions cause loss of bladder control?
- What are the treatments to regain bladder control? Which one is best for me?
- Can *you* help me, or can you tell me whom I should see instead?
- What can I do about the odor and rash caused by urine?





Keep a record to track your bladder control problems.

## What information should you bring to your doctor?

Before going to see your doctor, answer the questions on the next two pages. Check off the statements that apply to you. Fill in dates and other information. Show this sheet to your doctor at your next visit.

# What your doctor needs to know

- ☐ I take these prescription medicines:

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- ☐ I take these over-the-counter drugs  
(such as Tylenol, aspirin, or Maalox):

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If you take more medicines, please list them on a separate paper.

- ☐ I started having bladder trouble

☐ recently

☐ 1 to 2 years ago

☐ \_\_\_\_ years ago.

- ☐ Number of babies I have had: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ My periods stopped (menopause).  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ I recently had an operation.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ I recently hurt myself or have been sick.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of injury or illness: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I recently had a bladder (urinary tract) infection.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I am often constipated.
- ☐ I have pain or burning feelings when going to the toilet.
- ☐ I often have a *really* strong urge to go to the toilet right away.
- ☐ Sometimes my bladder feels full, even after I go to the toilet.
- ☐ I go to the toilet often, but very little urine comes out.
- ☐ I don't go out with friends or family because I worry about leaking urine.
- ☐ The first thing I do at new places is check the bathroom location.
- ☐ I worry about being put in a nursing home because of bladder control problems.

I have (or had) these medical problems:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cancer                | <input type="checkbox"/> Constipation       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crippling arthritis   | <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Depression            | <input type="checkbox"/> Diverticulitis     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interstitial cystitis | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple sclerosis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spinal cord injury    | <input type="checkbox"/> Stroke             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urinary infection     |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I smoke cigarettes.   |   |



## Does treatment work?

Treatment usually works. *Many women greatly improve their bladder control.*

Regaining control helps women enjoy healthier and happier lives.

### Points to Remember

- Bladder control problems can be caused by many medical conditions.
- Most bladder control problems can be improved.
- Your health care team can help you improve your bladder control.
- Getting over your embarrassment is important. You need to get treatment.

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